

Salmonid Coalition

Meeting Notes

March 28th, 2007

Draft Document

Item 1: Introductions

Adina Merenlender, Al Cadd, Amy Bolten, Amy Mai, Bill Cox, Bob Anderson, Bob Cooley, Robert Klampt, Brian Johnson, Carolyn Wasem, Charlie Carson, Colleen Fernauld, Daniel Mountjoy, Dave Lewis, Dave Ripple, Dennis Hunter, Dennis Murphy, Dick Butler, Dr. Merenlender, Dr. Horton, Jake MacKenzie, John Perry, Kara Heckert, Kathy Hayes, Keenan Foster, Marc Kelley, Mike Martini, Mr. Krishner, Nick Frey, Pete Dayton, Pete Down, Ralph Locke, Walt Ryan

Item 2: Out of Stream Reservoirs—Adina Merenlender

Questions to consider:

- How are the reservoirs being managed?
- How are other methods of diversions from the system affecting in stream flows?
- How deep is the reservoir and does it have any fill when the rainy season starts?
- How willing is the Ag community to participate in this process?
- What would help the Ag community?
- Where is the stress for the fish?
- Where are there problems from an economic standpoint and an environmental standpoint?
- What is the potential to time pumping activity on a given stream?

The more data we have on the reservoirs the better our understanding will be of the impact to the system because the models are only as good as the information that goes into them.

A current survey of these issues exists, but it was conducted in the form of interviews with open-ended questions. We would like to do a survey where we ask landowners to fill out a form that details what their reservoirs are used for, during what times of year, fill and drain levels at start and end of irrigation seasons, etc. We would also like to find sites where we can put gauges to measure stream flows. It would be possible to build the model in a way that allows for anonymity by asking for information without asking for the exact locations of the reservoirs in question.

Item 3: Ground Truthing

The question of when we might be in a position to start ground-truthing was posed. It may take a little longer for the water levels in some tributaries to be low enough to conduct the survey however some of the creeks may be ready now. Dr. Horton is ready to start whenever possible and was interested in who would be accompanying him.

The Department of Fish and Game is limited by only having one district biologist to cover 10 counties. Derek Aiken is the Russian River point person and can go out with Gregg when necessary. As of yet, DFG does not have a clear understanding of how detailed this ground-truthing is going to be.

Understanding pool volumes will be more difficult than resources available. DFG did not survey Sausal, Kellogg and Yellow jacket. DFG feels that it is important to look at those streams from the standpoint of barriers and sedimentation – this information can contribute to the assessment of channel complexity.

What factors are limiting because they are dynamic over time? What variables are consistent over time, i.e. embeddedness vs. cover? Which variables are more robust or less robust over time? These are the issues that ground truthing can help us better understand.

However, by getting onto this property in an organized fashion, we can get an idea of the characteristics of the reach. In the long run, we (representatives of the Agencies) are better off and the property owner is better off.

The RCD is willing and wants to participate in gaining landowner access. Seeing an entire reach at one time, or one day would be the best use of time. This is not only efficient – but also technically more robust. Our approach to landowners is that sometime within a two or three day timeframe, we will be coming through the stream reach and coming through the property. This flexibility adds to our ability to conduct site visits. We want the landowner there to help gain a historic perspective.

A database exists that will help with networking and identifying potentially willing landowner. The most productive way is to use the RCD as a focal point for access. RCD has two basic forms for gaining land access: one is more detailed than the other. One issue that needs resolution is that some people are not going to want to sign any form. RCD will serve as the clearinghouse, and take notes on a master spreadsheet. Trying to make appointments with each of these landowners is difficult.

The process is likely to include two separate surveys – linear down the stream corridor surveys and watershed surveys that are outside of stream corridor. Decoupling will be helpful.

Item 4: DC Trip

The purpose of trip was to discuss the 2007 Farm Bill with Members of Congress and their staff.

The \$1.75 billion the White House included in the Farm Bill that goes towards the Regional Water Enhancement Program (RWEF) has not gone unnoticed. The RWEF tracks what is being done by the Salmonid Coalition. The language does not say that the money goes directly to this group, but there are folks in Washington that are nurturing and supporting this project.

During the trip, representatives met with Senator Tom Harkin, his staff director and his Chief lawyer. Senator Harkin appeared supportive, as he has always been, of our conservation efforts.

Representatives also met with Congressman Mike Thompson and his Legislative Assistant, Jonathan Birdsong. His base constituency thinks that the RWEF is a terrific idea, and he has offered to help us in any way to keep it as part of the Farm Bill and secure funds for this effort.

The powerpoint presentation used during the trip to DC will be distributed to all members of the Salmonid Coalition.

Item 5: Urban Update: Conservation Dollars Spent Over the Last 10 Years

On a more formal basis, Chris DeGabriele presented information on the \$155 million that has been spent over the last 10 years on conservation and improvements to salmonid habitat. We are starting to work with the Water Agency and the vendors in local communities, State and Federal Agencies to let them know the extent of our efforts. This kind of effort is one that can result in a certain amount of success.

The technical advisory committee has studied the need for construction of a pipeline down Dry Creek for a number of years. A geomorphologist should be hired that will address flows within Dry Creek and its potential to convey water at existing levels relative to coho habitat. The Water Agency has placed the pipeline that would bypass Dry Creek is put into a study for an EIR. Conveyance of all potential deliveries needs to be explored; additionally we need to look at the ability to provide turnouts in a pipeline for the purpose of recharging ground water at specific

The technical advisory of the WAC meets once a month and all are invited. The WAC meets the first Mondays – February, May, August and November.

Item 6: Geomorphologist

The Water Agency is seeking names for a geomorphologist to work with the Agency and the Salmon Coalition. A geomorphologist needs to study Dry Creek understand if modifications and what type of modifications to the stream would better support Coho life cycles.